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AUTHOR Berry, Barnett; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The mission of the South Carolina Writing Improvement Network (WIN) is to improve students' writing abilities by providing professional development programs and writing activities for remedial writing teachers. A study assessed the effects of WIN on the growth and professional development of writing teachers, as well as the effects of the implementation of WIN on students' scores on the South Carolina Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP) Writing Test. A survey mailed directly to 100 WIN teachers received a response rate of 59%. Results showed that WIN has definitely had an impact on classroom writing practice. WIN instructors teach all facets of the writing process more frequently, and their students are receiving higher scores on the Basic Skills Assessment Program Writing Tests. The teachers reported that their knowledge of writing instruction had increased, and that their students had become better writers. In addition, teachers characterized themselves as more efficacious and more willing to draw on professional judgment rather than on a set of predetermined rules. The data also showed, however, that WIN teachers may have difficulty in the transition from traditional writing instruction to the more open-ended approach embedded within the writing process. Obstacles to this transformation appeared to include a lack of vested teacher power in a hierarchical administrative model and a lack of administrative knowledge and support of the writing process. (Six tables of data are included and two appendixes--the "Writing Improvement Network Survey" and the WIN Interview Protocols--are attached.) (PRA)

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Professional Development of the 90s: Teachers, Students, and the South Carolina Writing Improvement Network

by

Barnett Berry
Lyn Zalusky Mueller
Tom Smith

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INTRODUCTION

One cannot pick up an educational policy report without being overwhelmed with the urgency to professionalize teachers. As well, the public schools have been increasingly criticized for their inability to enable students to learn how to THINK -- a skill that most citizens will have to possess in order for the United States to compete successfully in the world marketplace. For many educators, the linchpin of thinking is reading and writing.

The current research on composition, posits that writing is a problem-solving process whereby students utilize a set of cognitive, social, and linguistic behaviors in order to plan, draft, and revise their written thoughts, (see the work of Murray, Graves, Calkins, and others). Commonly referred to as the writing process, the classroom teachers no longer detachedly assign, mark, and grade their students writing (Moffett, 1988) but instead engage and participate with their students in opportunities to think clearly about what one values, and then be able to articulate what one values to the community. In some ways, writing may be like pulling together disparate pieces of a puzzle, put then taking them apart in order to create a new puzzle. Writing can be about creating new knowledge out of old knowledge and may be the cornerstone of the current vision of teach efficacy (Lanier and Sedlak, 1989). The South Carolina Writing Improvement Network (WIN) is about this type of writing, the professionalization of teaching, and ultimately the

transformation of schooling.

WIN is a unique educational innovation created by the teachers of the South Carolina Writing Project (an affiliate of the National Writing Project). The overarching mission of WIN is to improve students' writing abilities by providing professional development programs and writing activities designed for teachers who teach remedial writing.

The foundation of this collaborative grass-roots professional development model is in the Bay Area Writing Project (BAWP) -- a recognized national model for the education of educators. Thus, WIN has been based on the premise that improvement of remedial students' writing can best occur through the training of their teacher in techniques of teaching writing and further, that such training can best be conducted by selected fellow teaches with administrative and educational assistance by writing experts. Liking to current notions of teacher empowerment and leadership, WIN is based on the notion that teachers are the best teachers of other teachers, especially if they themselves frequently write and critique each other's writing. In turn, these teachers can enable their students to become "teachers" through frequent writing, peer critique and demonstrations of performance.

Even though the success of implementing a model, such as WIN, is well-documented with antedotal accounts, few studies have assessed the effects of the use of a grass-roots model on: (1) the growth and professional development of teachers of writing

and as professional educators and (2) the effects of the implementation of WIN on scores on the South Carolina Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP) Writing Test. This, then, is the focus of this study.

GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

To address growth and professional development, a broad-scaled teacher survey was conducted in five school districts in which WIN had been extensively involved. This survey was divided into five sections (see Appendix A). Sections One and Two solicited demographic data, the level of educational preparation and teaching experience, number of classes taught per day, and total daily student enrollment of remedial students and/or remedial classes taught, as well as an estimation of when the respondents began using WIN writing strategies with their remedial students. Section Three asked respondents to list the frequency with which they wrote with their students, responded to their students' writings, read aloud to their classes, and shared their ideas about writing with other faculty members. In Section Four, teachers indicated the frequency with which their students were involved in various types of writing, including: writing for self, informational writing, and imaginative writing. Section Five utilized a scale of responses from "very false" to "very true" to gather data pertaining to the respondents present attitudes concerning WIN's impact on their perceptions of the teaching of writing. In these ten questions the teachers were asked if they felt that WIN had increased their knowledge of

writing instruction, if WIN had helped their students become better writers, and if it had contributed towards the teacher's freedom of expression in the classroom. The survey was mailed directly to 100 WIN teachers with a response rate of 59%. A dependent t test was used to analyze the data in Sections Three and Four while the cumulative frequencies were tabulated in Sections One, Two, and Five.

In two of the most active school districts, student writing samples were collected, four WIN classroom observations were conducted, and 11 teachers, 4 administrators, and 4 students were interviewed. Interview questions dealt with the effects of WIN on writing instruction, how administrative support enabled or limited the implementation of WIN-related principles, and how students responded to WIN-style writing instruction (see Appendix B).

The data clearly show that WIN has definitely had an impact on classroom writing practice. In general, WIN teachers reported that they had learned the writing process and had begun to utilize it in their classrooms more frequently than they did prior to participation in WIN.

But teachers reported more than a change in their writing instruction. They spoke to their becoming more efficacious and more willing to draw on professional judgement rather than on a set of predetermined rules. However, it should be noted that WIN teachers reported that they may have difficulty in the transition from more traditional writing instruction to the more open-ended,

somewhat nontraditional approach embedded within writing instruction. Obstacles to this transformation appear to include such issues as lack of vested teacher power in a hierarchical administrative model and lack of administrative knowledge and support of the writing process.

To describe these findings more specifically, presented below -- through a thematic-analytic approach -- is a synthesis of the survey, interview, and observational data. Because of the limited number of surveys collected and interviews and observations conducted, these findings should be viewed more as an initial framework for judging the efficacy of WIN. These findings are organized along the following themes: Teachers Learn the Writing Process and Transforming Teacher-Student Roles.

Teachers Learn the Writing Process

Most of the teachers indicated that during their college education they had received very limited training in formal writing. As one teacher said, "It was presumed (by our professors) that we could write a decent paragraph." When asked about their prior experience with personal writing the responses were at best mixed. Most noted that their previous writing experience was limited to writing letters to friends; a few responded that they did not write at all prior to WIN. As one teacher told us:

> Before WIN I was shot down as a writer, I was told that I was a terrible writer. Writing was painful and I didn't want my students to have to experience those feelings. I avoided teaching writing at every opportunity but I don't

believe it now.

Only two of the teachers interviewed had been actively writing (one had been writing a book with the hope of publication and another had been involved in a writing project in another state).

Before WIN, school district support for writing instruction ranged from spotty (i.e., an occasional one-shot teacher in-service) to rigid (i.e., requiring the teachers' students to write one essay a week for nine months). As one teacher explained:

> We were told to do the writing process and we were told to do a writing assignment each week. We had writing folders and were encouraged to do the entire process. Guidelines were clear on what types of writing experiences to cover such as exposition, narration, etc. as well as guidelines for spelling. We had to follow them.

Although the districts made attempts at increasing the students' writing competence, most efforts -- according to the teachers -- were more cosmetic than substantive. Little effort was directed toward the writing process and the instructional methods employed by the teachers reflected this attitude. Typical responses were:

> I just said take out your notebooks and write an essay about such and such period.
>
> I taught no prewriting activities of any kind, nor were students taken through the steps of the writing process. They wrote mainly about what are you going to do during the holidays and that kind of thing.
>
> I told my students how I wanted it done.
>
> The traditional method of teaching writing was followed. The teacher was the only audience and therefore the typical practice (for the teacher) involved bleeding red all over the student paper in an attempt to correct all the errors.

In general, the administrators who were interviewed corroborated the teachers' responses. One mentioned that "three years ago we were in the dark ages pertaining to writing -- the mandates we received specified what to do not how to do" while another added that writing was "taught by the whims of the teacher."

The linchpin of WIN is the writing process. Within this pedagogical framework, teachers engage students in problem-solving which promotes cognitive and linguistic behaviors that facilitate planning, drafting, and revising written thoughts. The data in Table 1 strongly suggests that after their involvement with WIN, teachers began -- much more often -- to use the writing process, write more with their students, read aloud to their students, and respond to their students' writing.[1]

Table 1: Writing Process Use - Teachers

	% RESPONDING THAT THEY DID AT AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK.	
	Prior to WIN	After WIN
Utilized the writing process	42	83
Write with my students	25	97
Respond to the writing of my students	40	78
Read aloud to my students	56	85

Transforming Teacher-Student Roles

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[1] Responding to students' writing is an important part of the writing process. Responses (by the teacher) to student writing may be verbal or written comments, and includes conferencing, holistically scoring a written work, or evaluating for a letter grade.

WIN has appeared to alter appreciably the role of the teacher and the student. Teachers and some principals spoke about the transformation of their students from the less passive student to one who actively "contributes" to the learning process. Increasingly teachers saw themselves as "a helper, a guide, an observer, a learner, and an advisor to students instead of a dictator." Teachers noted:

> My kids are not afraid to come to the front of the room and read something. Before (WIN) they wouldn't have done that but now they write something and want to share it. My classroom has become a writing community. Kids want copies of what their classmates write. Often while they are waiting in line to use the printer I overhear them ask "Would you please make a copy of what you wrote for me?" The kids have become helpers, they have more control, instead of being just a receiver the students have become givers and sharers. The teacher becomes the listener.
>
> They enjoy having more freedom and making their own decisions. They like helping to set the standards.
>
> My kids look forward to the time that I read aloud to them because they know that it is going to involve writing. They want me to return the books because they want to check them out.

One student said that "Writing is now like a hobby." Another noted that "writing expands my mind, it's fun, it teaches you how to think." All of the students indicated that they wrote at home in addition to writing in school.

Many teachers spoke about their students listening more to the other students in their group, becoming more tolerant of opposing ideas, and reacting to different ideas in a positive manner.

> They listen more, they are more comfortable with writing. You hear many of them respond to their peers with, "I get

what you are saying."

Principals also noted that they saw students responding to each other differently during the writing process. There was a "kind of a newsroom buzz in the classroom." The students seemed to "help as well as gain from each other" while engaged in the writing process. A principal added:

> They listen more. There is this interconnectedness, no hierarchy, students seem to say to each other, "I'll help you the next time." There is less individual effort.
>
> They are more empathic to a peer's writing. It has helped them with their self-esteem. They realize that they are not as bad as they thought they were.

Students spoke a great deal about the amount of sharing of ideas that now occurs in their writing class. They truly seemed to enjoy "trading their drafts," and eliciting responses from their peers. As one student noted:

> I ask how does it sound, how does it look? Can you see the picture in your mind?

In writing class they get along better with each other and the teacher. The students noted that one possible explanation could be their teachers' new teaching style.

> The teacher takes the time to explain something thoroughly if I don't understand. In other classes, if I don't understand, the teachers don't want to hear it; they just move on.

Another reason may be due to classroom organization and the freedom to share ideas when writing.

> We give each other a helping hand and share our ideas. We talk more about writing.

> We like to work together. We do it in here all the time. In other classes we have to wait until the teacher catches a good mood before we can work together.

Despite these professed changes in pedagogy, several teachers had difficulty with the transformation of the student-teacher role. One teacher spoke about becoming too close to her students and the balancing act she encountered while trying to maintain distance from some of her students.

> These are wonderful values with this idea but there are drawbacks as well. You write so much that you get too involved with your kids' lives and the balance between being a friend and being a disciplinarian is called into question. I find myself on a seesaw.

Despite these tensions and inconsistencies there is more evidence that students are becoming more responsible learners and the traditional teaching model has become less visible. The following vignette particularly illuminates this transformation.

Mrs. R's Classroom:

> On classroom walls were charts and posters. A collage of pictures, a Brave New World poster, snatches of poems, and a thought-provoking inscription which read "How long is a piece of string?" With the teachers desk set off to one side of the room the students desks were arranged in four rows of five. Students who had failed to complete the assignment sat in the last row perpendicular to the teacher.
>
> It was funny. These students were in the last days of their public school education and yet their essays were insightful, as if they wanted to do nothing else but write. An assignment had been given the week before. The students, college preparatory seniors, had been asked to explicate a poem or the lyrics to a popular song.
>
> The period began with students making their final changes. They read over their explications and talked to friends while making additions and deletions. The remainder of the period was spent in publication or reading aloud what they had written in front of their peers. The teacher asked for a volunteer to start. Nobody wanted to be first until a

student finally said, "I'll go."

The first student analyzed the song, "That's the Way" by Led Zeppelin. Her discussion included examples of literary devices found in the lyrics, comments about the song's theme, and an explanation of the song's figurative language. Other students also explicated songs from popular culture. Examples included Billy Joel's "She's Always a Woman," and U2's "Keeping the Dream Alive." Examples of the poetry included Dylan Thomas's Do Not go Gentle Into that Good Night and Sonnet 116 by William Shakespeare (See Appendix C-Classroom Observations and Writing Samples for additional collections).

I enjoyed the commonality of experience in this classroom. This so-called common culture was evident in the manner in which the students listened to their peers, in the way the teacher responded to her students, and the way in which the students supported the efforts of each other. A student read an exceptional piece, "Keeping the Dream Alive," and the number of volunteers suddenly dropped. The teacher selected someone who responded that she didn't couldn't write as well as the previous student. To this the teacher responded "That is all right, I can't write like him either. Let's go." The girl got up and read her work. Another time a student hesitated thinking aloud that her piece wasn't so good. A boy spoke up and said, "It is good, read it." I would like to have visited this class more often. They supported each other so well.

In sum, about 10 students presented their papers to their peers. While they read them in the front of the room, the remainder of the class listened attentively. They appeared eager to hear what their classmates thought.

Some of the principals concurred with these observations, noting that teacher and student roles had indeed been shifted from passivity to one of active involvement and collaborative.

Indeed, WIN teachers and principals spoke to changes in their students, in the functioning of their classrooms, and in themselves. They disagreed, however, about the lack of support provided by district supervisors, principals, and assistant principals. Teachers seemed to believe that few in the district

and school administration truly valued the communicative and collaborative aspects fundamental to the writing process.

We found considerable evidence of collaborative growth between student and student and between teacher and student. However, there did not appear to be similar type of growth between teacher and administrator. We frequently heard conflicting reports from teachers and administrators about genuine district and building support for the writing process. From teachers, we heard the following about school administrators:

> They don't know what is going on. I don't even know if she is aware that we even write.
>
> I don't think that my principal knows that I'm doing WIN in the classroom.
>
> My principal knows that I'm taking this course but doesn't know what kinds of things I am doing.
>
> WIN is a class that district administrators need to take so that they would be more understanding about the job of English teachers...
>
> The state and the district still require the teaching of isolated skills and documentation as to our teaching. I'm afraid we have not succeeded in educating the "powers that be" as to the benefits of connecting reading, writing, grammar, etc.

A similar range of responses was heard about the district administration. One teacher told us:

> They (the district office) were more supportive, there were more articles on integrative learning, paid leave for writing and whole language instruction, and encouraged heterogenous grouping. We heard words that were not used in the district before. However, we are still experiencing isolation, the administration is losing a great opportunity for sharing. They didn't give us professional leave to go to the WIN conference last fall in Columbia. We didn't go

because we might need our personal days for something else.

However, building level administrators observed that district support for their teachers to attend WIN workshops, annual conference, and presentations had been nothing less than facilitating:

> They have done everything they possibly could. They have supported the teachers going to conferences and presentations.
>
> We give our teachers release time to attend WIN meetings, workshops, and conferences.

This difference of perspective may be more fundamental than a disagreement over release time for teachers. Rather, it reflects a lack of day to day support or leadership for writing process instruction by the school and district administrators. Although administrators who were interviewed proved knowledgeable about the writing process, only one of the four had participated in a WIN inservice the previous academic year. This lack of intimate involvement with WIN may be due to increased time constraints, and the constriction of the administrators' formal job position. Without more extensive involvement, school administrators may continue to view WIN efforts as an event rather than a process of school change.

THE IMPACT OF WIN ON BSAP WRITING TEST SCORES

The South Carolina Basic Skills Assessment Program (BSAP) was established by legislation (enacted in 1978 and amended in 1984). Among the major provisions of BSAP were the establishment of: (a) statewide educational objectives in the basic skills of

reading, writing, and mathematics and (b) criterion-reference tests (for grades 1-3, 6, 8, and 10). The legislation explicitly required that the results of the testing program be used a basis for providing appropriate instruction for those students who do not achieve minimum standards.

The Writing Tests in Grades 6, 8, and 10 require that the student write a composition in response to a specific writing prompt.

Students in grades 6 and 8 are administered the BSAP Writing Test during the spring semester of the academic year. In high school, tenth grade students are administered the Exit Examination during the same time period. Beginning with the 1989-1990 graduating class, students receiving a South Carolina diploma must have passed all three subtests (reading, mathematics, and writing) of the Exit Examination. Therefore, those students who do not achieve the minimum standards as 10th graders will retake those sections of the Exit Examination that they did not pass in the spring of grade 11 and in the fall of grade 12. The writing tests are scored according to the BSAP Modified Holistic Scoring Scale with scores ranging from 1 to 4.

For this study, test scores from three districts have been selected for analysis. Two of these districts have been categorized as "active", and one has been categorized as "follow-up". WIN's involvement in a district is considered "active" if a district was involved with WIN for extensive intervention sessions designed to address particular problems.

On-the-other-hand, a district was classified as "follow-up" if it had been active within one to two years previously. In both the active and follow-up case, schools were selected for analysis if they contained a significant number of WIN teachers involved in teaching remedial writing students at the middle and high school levels. The writing scores obtained compared each school's 1990 BSAP writing scores with their previous performance (1988 and 1989) as well as with the overall statewide writing scores.

The Active Districts

Officials in school districts "A" and "D" were concerned about the 1989 BSAP writing scores of their middle school students. In both districts, approximately 77% of the eighth grade students passed. During this same year, the statewide pass rate hovered around 83 percent.

In the Spring of 1990, the 8th grade BSAP writing scores in district "A" reflected significant gains (see Table 2). Five of the district's seven middle schools' pass rates exceeded the average South Carolina state average. The average pass rate for these five schools was 87.5 percent while the state average declined to 81.8 percent. Only two schools did not exceed the overall statewide 8th grade pass rate. However, these two schools did achieve dramatic results. School "A.1" increased its pass rate from 63 to 79 percent while School "A.2" increased its pass rate from 68 to 79 percent. In 1989, these two schools were between 15 and 20 percent below the overall statewide 8th grade

pass rate for writing. However, by 1990, these two schools cut the margin to just about 3 percent.

In school District "D" all middle/junior high schools' overall pass rates on the BSAP writing exam fell below the 1989 statewide average 83% (see Table 3). The four middle/junior high schools had 1989 pass rates that ranged from 71.4 to 81.65 percent. Despite the writing problems identified at the middle/junior high school level, most of WIN's inservice efforts were directed toward the high school -- where 10th grade scores on BSAP writing were quite low. In the District's two high schools, 61 and 69 percent of the students respectively passed the writing portion of the 1989 Exit Examination. The overall 1989 state pass rate on the BSAP Writing Exit Exam was 79.1 percent.

Table 2

SCHOOL DISTRICT "A"
BSAP Passing Percentages
Grade 8
1989 to 1990

Middle School	1989 Passing %	1990 Passing %	% Change
A.1	63	79	+16
A.2	68	79	+11
A.3	77	84	+07
A.4	81	88	+07
A.5	88	91	+03
A.6	84	85	+01
A.7	88	88	+00

1989 District "A" BSAP average 78% State Average 83.0%
1990 District "A" BSAP average 85% State Average 81.8%

Table 3

SCHOOL DISTRICT "D"
BSAP Passing Percentages
Grade 8
1989 to 1990

Middle School	1989 Passing %	1990 Passing %	Change %
D.1	81.00	82.30	+1.03
D.2	81.65	81.90	+0.04
D.3	81.30	80.00	-1.20
D.4	71.40	71.40	0.0

1989 District "D" BSAP average 79% State Average 83.0%
1990 District "D" BSAP average 79% State Average 81.8%

As shown in Table 3, in 1990, two of the four middle/junior high schools were above the overall statewide pass rate. School D.1 had an 82.3 pass rate while School D.2 had a 81.9 pass rate (compared to the 1990 statewide pass rate of 81.8%). School D.3 had a 80.0 pass rate while School D.4 remained stable with a 71.4 pass rate. Despite the lack of significant movement, both School D.3 and D.4 registered slight gains in their 8th grade raw writing scores. Clearly, progress on the writing portion of 8th grade BSAP exam was not as dramatic as evidenced in School District "A."

In 1990 writing exit exam pass rate for all 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students at School D.5 increased from 61 to 65.5 percent while at School D.6 the aggregate pass rate remained relatively stable (with a slight, albeit insignificant, decrease from 69 to 68.9 percent). Although not seemingly dramatic, the 1989 to 1990 changes in the scores of remedial and compensatory students reflected the inroads that WIN appeared to make.

As shown in Table 4, for School D.5 in 1989, 76 percent of the ninety 10th graders passed the Exit Examination on their first attempt. In 1990, the first attempt pass rate of the 104 tenth graders declined to 75 percent. Despite the decline in 10th grade pass rate from 1989 to 1990, this does not appear to be cause for concern for two reasons. The 1990 10th grade class was larger than the 1989 class and, most importantly, the raw writing score of these two groups remained stable at 2.8.

At School D.6 in 1989, 74 percent of the 260 10th grade students passed the writing portion of the Exit Examination on

Table 4

SCHOOL DISTRICT "D"
Average 10th Grade Exit Examination
Pass Rates and Raw Writing Scores
from 1989 to 1990
(first attempt)

High School	1989 Passing %	1990 Passing %	% change
D.5	76	75	-1
D.6	74	74	0

1989 D.5 total school pass rate 61.0%
1990 D.5 total school pass rate 65.5%

1989 D.6 total school pass rate 69.0%
1990 D.6 total school pass rate 68.9%

their first attempt with an average raw writing score of 2.87.

In 1990, 74 percent of the 227 tenth grade students passed on their first attempt with an average raw writing score of 2.94. Similar to School D.5, the pass rate of D.6 remained stable even though the population of the 1990 tenth grade class had decreased by 33 students.

The Follow-up School District

After WIN involvement in 1988-1989, both middle schools in School District L exceeded the state pass rate on the 1989 8th grade BSAP writing exam. As shown in Table 5, school L.1 had a pass rate of 94.8 percent while School L.2 had a pass rate of 92.6 percent: each comparing very favorably to the overall state pass rate of 83 percent. However, in 1989-90, follow-up activities were considered by WIN to be "spotty" because of a lack of administrative support.

In 1989-90, the 8th grade writing pass rate for both schools declined slightly: 94.29 percent in L.1 and 91.01 percent in L.2. From 1989 to 1990 School L.1 8th grade raw scores decreased from 3.46 to 3.42 while School L.2 8th grade raw scores decreased from 3.36 to 3.30. In part, these decreases may be explained by the fact that follow-up teachers continue to need more intensive and continuous assistance. However, our interview data suggested that the 8th grade test score decrease may be best explained by the schools' staffing of their remedial writing program. Both schools share one remedial writing teacher. Thus, the teacher is

Table 5

SCHOOL DISTRICT "L"
BSAP Passing Percentages
Grade 8
1989 to 1990

Middle School	1989 Passing %	1990 Passing %	Change %
L.1	94.80	94.26	-0.54
L.2	92.60	91.01	-1.59

1989 District "L" BSAP average 93.9% State Average 83.0%
1990 District "L" BSAP average 92.6% State Average 81.8%

constantly on the move serving remedial students in one school for part of the academic year and then in the other for the other part of the year. Given this structure, some remedial students are taught for an entire period and while other only receive instruction during their lunch break.

According to Table 6, in 1989, the writing exit exam pass rate at School L.3 was 85 percent while the pass rate for L.4 was 91 percent, well above the state pass rate of 79.1 percent. From 1989 to 1990 School L.3 exit exam raw scores increased from 3.16 to 3.19 while School L.4 exit exam raw scores increased from 3.15 to 3.32. In doing so, the overall 1990 pass rate for L.3 increased to 89 percent while at L.4 it increased to 92.9 percent.

The 1989 pass rate for the 151 students attending grade 10 at School L.3 was 94 percent. The 1989 raw writing score for this same group was 3.3. Although the tenth grade class of school L.3 increased by 10 students during 1990, their pass rate remained stable at 94 percent while their raw writing score decreased to 3.2.

At School L.4 in 1989, 93 percent of the seven hundred and twenty-four 10th graders passed the Exit Examination on their first attempt. The raw writing score for this same group of students was 3.18. In 1990, the first attempt pass rate of the 708 tenth graders increased slightly to 94 percent while the raw writing score increased to 3.36.

Table 6

SCHOOL DISTRICT "L"
Average 10th Grade Exit Examination
Pass Rates and Raw Writing Scores
from 1989 to 1990
(first attempt)

High School	1989 Passing %	1990 Passing %	% change
L.3	94	94	0
L.4	93	94	+1

The results of the writing portion of the Exit Examination for 10th grade students in district "L" largely remained stable from 1989 to 1990 despite slight changes in the raw writing scores.

CONCLUSION

In general, WIN has definitely had an impact upon classroom writing practice in that teachers currently teach all facets of the writing process more frequently than they did prior to attending WIN sessions. The teachers reported an increase in most types of writing by their students. They also reported that their knowledge of writing instruction had increased and that their students had become better writers. But teachers reported more than a change in their writing instruction. They spoke to their becoming more efficacious and more willing to draw on professional judgement rather than on a set of predetermined rules.

The data also shows that WIN teachers may have difficulty in the transition from more traditional writing instruction to the more open-ended, somewhat nontraditional approach embedded within the writing process. Obstacles to this transformation appeared to include lack of vested teacher power in a hierarchical administrative model and lack of administrative knowledge of the writing process.

In addition, data analysis of the scores on the South Carolina Basic Skills Exit Examination Writing Tests revealed significant gain scores for students of WIN teachers. Passing

rates, for these tests, increased as did the average holistic scores obtained by students in WIN classrooms.

The initial effects of WIN indicate quite clearly that this professional development model has significant implications of transforming the occupation of teaching into a profession by providing opportunities for collaboration inquiry, curriculum development, and instructional problem-solving as well as transforming students from passive recipients of knowledge to active learners who seek to create knowledge.

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS

Writing Improvement Network Survey
Spring 1990

This questionnaire is divided into five sections. Questions on Parts I and II require you to respond either with check marks or to complete short answers. In Parts III, IV, and V you will be asked to assess numerous statements concerning WIN. Thank you.

Part I - Background Information

1. My gender is:

   female ( )
   male ( )

2. The grade level I teach is _____

3. The total number of years of teaching experience I have is

   _____

4. The total number of years that I have taught writing is (if comments are needed please note below).

   _____

5. Which of the following most accurately describes your educational preparation?

   less than Bachelors ( )
   Bachelors only ( )
   Bachelors + 18 hrs. ( )
   Masters ( )
   Masters + 30 ( )
   Ed.S. ( )
   Ph.D. or Ed.D. ( )

6. In which district is your school located?

_____

7. The name of my school is _____

8. Currently, how many classes do you teach a day?

_____

9. Please list your total daily student enrollment (for all of your classes).

_____

Part II

Directions: Using the definition below please answer questions 10 - 13.

The Educational Improvement Act has defined remedial education students as those who "have not adequately mastered the skills and concepts presented though previous instruction." These students were believed to have "developed gaps" in their learning, and can be expected to score below standard on the BSAP and below grade level on the CTBS. Consequently, remedial educational programs are to reteach or reinforce specific basic skills in reading, mathematics, and writing.

10. Please list the total number of remedial **students** whom you serve daily.

_____

11. Please list the total number of remedial **classes** which you teach daily.

_____

12. Please list the total number of remedial **writing** students you teach daily.

_____

13. Approximately when did you begin to use WIN writing strategies in your classroom with your remedial students? (month and year)

Part III

Directions: Please read each statement below. Decide how often you participated in each activity **prior to your involvement with the Writing Improvement Network**. Using the scale below circle the appropriate response.

1	2	3	4	5
never	a few times a year or less	a few times a month	once a week	a few times a week

Prior to my involvement with WIN:

14. I used the writing process with my students:

1 2 3 4 5

15. I wrote with my students:

1 2 3 4 5

16. I responded to the writings of my students:

1 2 3 4 5

17. I read aloud to my students:

1 2 3 4 5

18. I shared my ideas (about writing) with other faculty:

1 2 3 4 5

Directions. Decide how often you **currently participate in each activity**. Using the scale below circle the appropriate response.

1	2	3	4	5
never	a few times a year or less	a few times a month	once a week	a few times a week

Currently,:

19. I use the writing process with my students:

1 2 3 4 5

20. I write with my students:

1 2 3 4 5

21. I respond to the writings of my students:

1 2 3 4 5

22. I read to my students:

1 2 3 4 5

23. I share my ideas (about writing) with other faculty:

1 2 3 4 5

Part IV

Directions: Please read each statement below. Decide how often your students participated in each type of writing **prior to your involvement with the Writing Improvement Network**. Using the scale below circle the appropriate response.

1	2	3	4	5
never	a few times a year or less	a few times a month	once a week	a few times a week

Prior to my involvement with WIN, the students in my class wrote:

24.	word plays (for example: riddles and puns)	1	2	3	4	5
25.	labels and captions	1	2	3	4	5
26.	journals or diaries	1	2	3	4	5
27.	actual dialogue from discussion and/ or transcripts	1	2	3	4	5
28.	invented stories (for example: fiction, fables, or poetry)	1	2	3	4	5
29.	true stories (for example: autobiographies, personal essays, memoirs, and biographies)	1	2	3	4	5
30.	directions	1	2	3	4	5
31.	factual essays (for example: opinions and editorials)	1	2	3	4	5
32.	informational writing	1	2	3	4	5
33.	generating ideas (for example: brainstorming, clustering, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
34.	plays or skits	1	2	3	4	5

Directions. Decide how often your students **currently participate in each type of writing**. Using the scale below circle the appropriate response.

1	2	3	4	5
never	a few times a year or less	a few times a month	once a week	a few times a week

Currently, my students write:

35.	word plays (for example: riddles and puns)	1	2	3	4	5
36.	labels and captions	1	2	3	4	5
37.	journals or diaries	1	2	3	4	5
38.	actual dialogue from discussion and/ or transcripts	1	2	3	4	5
39.	invented stories (for example: fiction, fables, or poetry)	1	2	3	4	5
40.	true stories (for example: autobiographies, personal essays, memoirs, and biographies)	1	2	3	4	5
41.	directions	1	2	3	4	5
42.	factual essays (for example: opinions and editorials)	1	2	3	4	5
43.	informational writing	1	2	3	4	5
44.	generating ideas (for example: brainstorming, clustering, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
45.	plays or skits	1	2	3	4	5

Part V

Directions: The concluding set of statements pertain to your **present attitudes** concerning WIN's impact upon your perceptions of the teaching of writing. Using the scale below circle the response which best describes your present attitude.

1	2	3	4	5
very false				very true

46. I believe that the Writing Improvement Network has increased my knowledge of writing instruction.

1 2 3 4 5

47. When reading the writings of my students, I have found myself grading less and responding more.

1 2 3 4 5

48. I believe that teaching the writing process has helped my writing students to become better writers.

1 2 3 4 5

49. I believe that my writing students are now more able to transfer the writing skills they have learned into other academic contexts.

1 2 3 4 5

50. I believe that participation in the writing process has fostered more freedom for my students to express their inner thoughts.

1 2 3 4 5

51. I believe I am more comfortable with the uncertainty of the writing process.

1 2 3 4 5

52. Participation in the Writing Improvement Network has offered me the forum to admit that I do not possess all the answers to life's fuzzy problems.

1 2 3 4 5

53. I believe that participating in the Writing Improvement Network has provided me with an avenue whereby I can share my ideas about education with my colleagues.

1 2 3 4 5

54. I believe that participating in the Writing Improvement Network has allowed me an opportunity to rely more upon my professional judgment rather than upon a set of predetermined rules.

1 2 3 4 5

55. Participation in the Writing Improvement Network has allowed me greater creative freedom in my classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

Please use this space to write any additional comments you wish to add.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

WIN Teacher Interview Protocol
Spring 1990

This interview is part of a larger study which explores the effects for the Writing Improvement Network on the teaching of writing in South Carolina public schools. In addition to these interviews surveys will be distributed to writing teachers during the latter half of May, 1990.

This part of the study provides an opportunity to meet with teachers to learn more about your ideas concerning the effects of the Writing Improvement Network. We anticipate meeting with you for about 30 minutes and will ask you a number of open ended questions to give you the opportunity to tell us your views on this issue. Please feel free to be honest in responding since we guarantee complete confidentiality in reporting our results.

The primary goal of the Writing Improvement Network is to provide training for teachers based on an innovative model which involves teachers in instructional problem solving and it is this goal around which our conversation today will revolve. The first set of questions will pertain to writing instruction prior to your involvement with WIN.

1) Would you please comment on how much and what kinds of instruction in the teaching of writing that you received prior to your involvement with the WIN inservices? (including undergraduate experience)

2) Prior to your involvement with WIN, what types of support from your district did you receive concerning writing instruction?

3) Before you incorporated the process writing approach to writing instruction, how did you teach writing?

4) What types of writing did you personally engage in prior to your involvement with WIN?

Since your involvement with WIN what types of writing do you do?

Now lets turn to a discussion of the effects which WIN has had upon your perceptions of yourself as a teacher of writing, of your writing instruction, of your district's response to writing instruction, and of your students.

1) How would you define the writing process approach?

2) How has WIN changed your perception of writing instruction?

3) What are the kinds of strategies that you now employ when teaching writing in your classroom?

4) Which parts of the writing process have you found yourself spending a greater of your classroom time?

5) How has the process approach to writing changed your perceptions concerning the role of the student in the classroom?

-concerning the role of the teacher in the classroom?

6) How have you incorporated writing into the other content areas?

7) How do your students respond to each other during the writing process?

8) How has WIN effected the decision making process within your classroom?

9) Since your district became involved with WIN, have you noticed changes in the way your district and school administration have responded to you as a professional educator? If yes, how?

10) What has been the administration's response toward this method of teaching writing?

Probe: How the administration has allowed greater teacher leeway concerning how best to teach writing students?

11) How has WIN effected you personally as a writer?

12) How has your knowledge of teaching writing increased?

This concludes the formal parts of our interview, are there any other comments that you wish to add concerning what we have spoken about today?

WIN Principal Interview Protocol
Spring 1990

This interview is part of a larger study which explores the effects for the Writing Improvement Network on the teaching of writing in South Carolina public schools. In addition to these interviews surveys will be distributed to writing teachers during the latter half of May, 1990.

This part of the study provides an opportunity to meet with principals to learn more about your ideas concerning the effects of the Writing Improvement Network. We anticipate meeting with you for about 30 minutes and will ask you a number of open ended questions to give you the opportunity to tell us your views on this issue. Please feel free to be honest in responding since we guarantee complete confidentiality in reporting our results.

The primary goal of the Writing Improvement Network is to provide training for teachers based on an innovative model which involves teachers in instructional problem solving and it is this goal around which our conversation today will revolve. The first set of questions will pertain to writing instruction prior to your involvement with WIN.

1) Prior to your school's involvement with WIN, what types of district support did your faculty receive concerning writing instruction?

2) Before process writing approach was incorporated into writing instruction, how was writing taught in this school?

Now lets turn to a discussion of the effects which WIN has had upon of the writing instruction in this school, of your district's response to writing instruction, and the response of the student body .

4) How would you define the writing process approach?

5) How has WIN changed your perception of writing instruction?

4) From your classroom observations what are the kinds of writing instruction strategies that you are finding being employed by your WIN teachers?

5) In your opinion, which parts of the writing process (for example: prewriting, drafting, revision) have you observed your writing teachers spending a greater proportion of their classroom time?

6) How has the process approach to writing changed your perceptions concerning the role of the student in the classroom?

-concerning the role of the teacher in the classroom?

7) Do your WIN teachers incorporate writing into the other content areas? If yes, how?

8) Have you noticed a difference in the way students in this school respond to each other during the writing process? If yes, please describe the difference.

9) Since your district became involved with WIN, have your district administrators responded differently to your WIN faculty. If yes, please describe the response.

10) In your opinion, what have you found to be advantageous about the Writing Improvement Network?

-what have you found to be disadvantageous about the Writing Improvement Network?

12) How has your personal knowledge of teaching writing increased?

13) Other than curricular writing changes what other changes have you observed with your school's writing teachers that you can attribute to WIN?

This concludes the formal parts of our interview, are there any other comments that you wish to add concerning what we have spoken about today?

Thank you for your time and assistance with this project.

WIN Student Interview Protocol
Spring 1990

How do you feel about yourself as a writer?

Do you write often? In school? At home?

What kinds of writing did you do before this year?

What kinds of writing do you do now?

(i.e., riddles and puns, labels and captions, journals or diaries, actual dialogue from discussion or transcripts, fiction, fables, poetry, autobiographies, personal essays, memoirs, biographies, directions, opinions and editorials, informational writing)

What process do you use when you write?

(i.e.,) webbing, clustering, mapping, brainstorming, generating ideas, jot list, writing rough drafts, writing additional drafts, revising, editing, publishing, giving and getting feedback, editing for content, editing for mechanics, sharing with other students, reading aloud over intercom)

Did you teach yourself this process?

Before your teacher taught you this process how were you taught to write?

Which parts of the writing process have you found yourself spending a great deal of time on?

Do you talk to or respond to the other students in your class while you are writing? While they are writing? What do you talk about?

Is there anything different in this class about the ways that students work with each other? Is there anything different in this class about the ways that the teacher works with students?

Do you use writing in your other classes?

Are there any other comments that you have about what goes on in this or any of your other classes concerning writing?